of Plastics in Agriculture. After taking into consideration the unspent balance available with the State Government, the amount for drip irrigation was enhanced to Rs. 98.84 lakhs during 1997-98.

Area under Palm Oil Cultivation

2914. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the area under palm oil is increasing every year;

(b) what is the acreage under palm oil presently in the country;

(c) the acreage figures under palm oil plantation, state-wise;

(d) whether Government has received any representations from farmers in Andhra Pradesh on the glut in plam oil; and

(e) the steps proposed to help Andhra Pradesh farmers raising palm oil seeds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) State-wise and total acreage under Oil Palm plantations presently in the country are given in the statement (*see* below) :

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Government is implementing a Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) in Andhra Pradesh to ensure that Oil Palm growers are paid reasonable price of Oil Palm Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFBs). Under the scheme Government is procuring oil palm Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFBs) from farmers at a price of Rs. 2750 per MT.

Statement

Area under Oil Palm Plantation presently in the Country (Provisional)

S.No.	Name of the State	Area in ha.
1	2	3.
1.	Andhra Pradesh	24,128
2.	Karnataka	5,339
3.	Tamil Nadu	9,250
4.	Gujarat	233
5.	Orissa	1,047
6.	Goa	684
7.	Tripura	86
8.	Assam	10

1	2	3
9.	Kerala	3,646
10.	Maharashtra	1,000
11.	Andaman & Nicobar	1,593
	Total :	47,016

Spread of Coconut Mite AFFECTD Disease

2915. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have given any financial support to the coconut cultivators suffering by the widespread coconut mite;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by various Government Departments to assist the affected farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Coconut Development Board under this Ministry has supported the efforts of State Governments by providing financial assistance of Rs. 171.40 lakhs and Rs. 667.45 lakhs for control of mite under the Scheme-I integrated Farming in Coconut Holding during the year 1998-99 and 1999-2000 respectively. In addition, the Board has released Rs. 0.925 lakhs to the Project Directorate of Biological Control, Bangalore to undertake research on Biological Control of mite.

(c) The Coconut Development Board has played a key role starting from the identification of the problem of coconut mite to sensitizing the issue for research support, creating awareness for its management through publication of literature and coordination of training. Research efforts in State Agriculture Universities as well as Central Plantation Crops Research Institute have been intensified. Coconut Development Board is regularly monitoring research and development work relating to control of mite. A team of scientists appointed by Department has gone into the problem in detail and made suitable recommendations for the control of mite. To intensify further research, a network project for the control of *Eriophyid* mite in coconut has been approved with a total cost of Rs. 1.42 crores. The network project is being implemented by Central Plantation Crops Research Institute, Kasargod; Kerala Agricultural University, Trichur; University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad; Project Directorate of Biological Control, Bangalore; All